

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, WALTER REED ARMY MEDICAL CENTER  
6900 Georgia Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20307-5001

HR-7 Nursing Policy

24 June 2005

**Essential Personnel**

**1. Purpose:** To provide guidance to all Nursing personnel regarding attendance of personnel in the event of closure under emergency situations.

**2. Scope:** This policy applies to all nursing personnel.

**3. Reference:**

- a. Walter Reed Army Medical Center Emergency Management Plan
- b. Officer of Personal Management: Pay And Leave Guidance for Federal Employees Affected by Washington, DC, Area Dismissal or Closure Procedures, Questions and Answers. Accessed on the Web on 24 June 2005 at <http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/dismissalQA.asp>

**4. Policy:**

a. Clinical nursing personnel and administrative staff in direct support of the continuing clinical mission are designated as essential and are required for duty in the event of closure under any emergency situation. These emergency situations include, but are not limited to, weather emergencies, such as snow or ice, and non-weather related emergencies such as acts of terrorism. In addition, if the Federal government closes due to emergency reasons, but requires essential personnel to report for duty, clinical nursing personnel and the administrative staff in direct support of these personnel must report for their next regularly scheduled tour of duty. The following nursing positions are designated as essential for emergency situations:

- 1) All Army Nurse Corps officers
  - 2) All enlisted clinical personnel (Examples include, but are not limited to, MOS 91D, 91W, 91WM6 and 91X)
  - 3) All Registered Nurses (0610 series)
  - 4) All Licensed Practical Nurses (0620 series)
  - 5) All Nursing Assistants and Medical Support Assistants
- All essential personnel, military and civilian, will provide their immediate supervisor with a telephone number for contact purposes.

b. Additionally, all contract nursing personnel, (including, but not limited to, Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses, Nursing Assistants, Medical Support/Technical Assistants, Psychiatric Technicians, and Surgical Technicians) on duty or scheduled for duty in clinical areas, are considered essential personnel. Essential personnel status job duties and special pricing agreements shall be incorporated into all future nursing contracts subsequent to the effective date of this policy.

c. Nursing personnel will be notified of their official designation as an essential employee (Appendix A). The Memorandum of Official Designation as an Essential Employee is reviewed with each staff member, signed, updated as needed and initialed annually.

//original signed//  
JOAN P. EITZEN  
COL, AN  
Deputy Commander for Nursing

## APPENDIX A

MCHL-N

24 June 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR \_\_\_\_\_

SUBJECT: Official Designation as an Essential Employee

1. Your position as \_\_\_\_\_ has been designated as essential during emergency situations (e.g., snow, severe icing, floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, power failure, and other like conditions). Accordingly, you are required to report to work on time when emergency situations exist.
2. This designation of your position requires you to report for work as scheduled and/or remain at work to ensure continuity of services or quality care of patients. Your professional commitment to continuity of services or quality patient care is commendable and deeply appreciated. It is recognized that there may be circumstances that warrant special consideration of your personal situation during these crisis situations. I assure you that it is our intent to be as supportive as possible, realizing that hospital operations must continue.
3. The following guidelines apply to your duty status under certain circumstances:
  - a. If you are on duty when an emergency situation occurs, you are required to remain on duty until released by your supervisor. This includes directed overtime, if appropriate. Non-emergency sick leave and annual leave scheduled for this period may be cancelled.
  - b. If the emergency situation occurs during non-duty hours you will report to duty at your next regularly scheduled tour of duty. If called to report earlier than regularly scheduled, you will report for duty as directed unless excused by your supervisor. No unscheduled annual leave will be granted during the emergency situation. Any unscheduled sick leave that is requested during the emergency situation will require documentation from your health care provider.
  - c. If it is necessary to contact your supervisor and he/she is not available, contact the next level of supervisor for guidance. That number is: \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Please contact me should you have questions about this policy. Your cooperation and supportive attitude will ensure that our team will be able to continue care for our patients in a professional and manageable way. Again, accept my personal thanks for your efforts that go the extra step in supporting this activity.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Member Signature\_\_\_\_\_  
Date\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor's Signature\_\_\_\_\_  
Date